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Marine Invertebrates

Tardigrades

Diplodactylus anaholiensis

Diplodactylus borrori

Echiniscus sp.

Echiniscus marginatus

Ramazzottius horningi

SPECIES STATUS:

IUCN Red List - Not considered

All Endemic

SPECIES INFORMATION: Tardigrades are referred to as water bears and are highly specialized. Most tardigrades feed on plant cells that they pierce open. All require wet habitats but these can be small or ephemeral. All species considered here are marine. Tardigrades that live in the soil feed on algae and detritus. Some species are carnivorous. Male and female tardigrades are sexually distinct and usually reproduce sexually, but parthenogenesis is also common. Females lay from one to 30 eggs. Some species' eggs are able to withstand desiccation. Little specific information on these species habits in Hawai'i exists.

DISTRIBUTION: Poorly known as sampling has been inadequate. The *Diplodactylus* spp. were found in interstitial sands on Kauai.

ABUNDANCE: Unknown.

LOCATION AND CONDITION OF KEY HABITAT: They can live in marine habitats such as shallow or deep interstitial areas.

THREATS: None identified.

CONSERVATION ACTIONS: In addition to common statewide and marine conservation actions, specific actions include:

- Ensure healthy habitats are maintained.

MONITORING:

- Survey for populations and distribution in known and likely habitats.

RESEARCH PRIORITIES:

- Improve understanding of ecology in Hawai'i and factors affecting the species population size and distribution.

References:

Barnes RD. 1980. Invertebrate zoology. Philadelphia, PA: Saunders College. 1089 pp.